

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LIBREV 00438 01 OF 02 181058Z
ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 /024 W
-----181122 092698 /21

R 180940Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8932

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 LIBREVILLE 0438

PASS USIA WASHDC

USIA FOR IAA

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SCUL
SUBJECT: REVIEW OF USG ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM

REF: AIRGRAM A-155

A VARIETY OF ENGLISH TEACHING PROGRAMS EXIST IN GABON AND THE
FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS MAY BE DRAWN.

1. ENGLISH IN THE CURRICULUM OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

FRENCH IS FIRST FOREIGN LANGUAGE OF ALL GABONESE, AND IS
TAUGHT FROM BEGINNING OF THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL. AT BEGINNING
OF THE SECONDARY CYCLY, STUDYENTS MUST TAKE A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE

,
AND WHILE VARIOUS OPTIONS EXIST, ENGLISH IS LANGUAGE MOST WIDELY
CHOSEN - (OTHER LANGUAGES INCLUDE GERMAN, ITALIAN, SPANISH AND
ARABIC, THE LATTER GAING PARTIDULARLY IN IMPORTANCE WITH INCREASED
INTEREST IN OIL AND OIL RESERVES IN GABON).

ALL SCHOOLS ARE SUBSIDIZED BY THE STATE, INCLUDING THOSE RUN
BY RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS. PUPILS ALSO ARECEIVE A SUBSIDY,
INCREASED RECENTLY TO 7,000 CFA(ABOUT 35 DOLLARS) A MONTH
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LIBREV 00438 01 OF 02 181058Z

TO INDUCE THEM TO STAY I SCHOOL.

IN SPITE THESE SUBSIDIES, A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS REMAIN
TO CONFRONT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENGLISH PROGRAMS:

(A) TEACHERS ARE 90 PCT EXPATRAITE (INCLUDING 18 PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS). THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 12-15 GABONESE PRESENTLY TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. ABOUT 3PCT OF TEACHERS AT THE UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL ARE GABONESE. OTHER TEACHERS INCLUDE FRENCH COOPERANTS AND AFRICANS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES RECRUITED IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES FOR HIGHER SALARIES THAN THEY COULD RECEIVE IN THEIR OWN SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

(B) LACK OF MOTIVATION AND DISCIPLINE ON THE PART OF STUDENTS. BECAUSE OF THEIR HIGH MONTHLY STIPEND, MANY COME TO SCHOOL TO GET PAID AND FOR RELATIVELY LITTLE ELSE.

(C) OVERCROWDED CLASSROOMS. A PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER FROM ONE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE INTERIOR REPORTED CLASSES OF 80 OR MORE. THIS IS NOT COMMON AROUND LIBREVILLE, BUT CAUSES GREAT PROBLEMS IN SOME OF SCHOOLS IN INTERIOR.

(D) LACK OF MATERIALS, PAPER, CHALK TEXTBOOKS. THOSE THOSE TEXTBOOKS IN USE ARE FRENCH PRODUCED AND ORIENTED. THERE IS A LACK OF STRUCTURING AND SEQUENCING. DIRECT TEACHING METHODS ARE DIFFICULT TO APPLY. ENGLISH IS TAUGHT THROUGH FRENCH.

(E) THERE IS NO ORGANIZATION OF CONTROL AND INSPECTION WITH A RESULTANT LACK OF COORDINATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL. STANDARDIZATION IS NONEXISTENT, AND MOST TEACHERS ARE NOT EVEN FAMILIAR WITH THE ESTABLISHED PROGRAM.

(F) ON THE LOCAL LEVEL, THERE IS INADEQUATE DIRECTION WITHIN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS ARE INSUFFICIENTLY TRAINED OR COMMITTED TO THE PROFESSION.

GABON IS A PROSPEROUS AND RAPIDLY DEVELOPING COUNTRY. IT IS UNDERPOPULATED AND THERE IS NO VOLUNTARY UNEMPLOYMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LIBREV 00438 01 OF 02 181058Z

IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, BUT THESE ARE UNFORTUNATELY THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH WILL HAVE TO EXIST FOR SOME YEARS YET TO COME.

2. ENGLISH IN THE CURRICULUM OF THE UNIVERSITY. AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL THE RESULTS OF THIS POOR BASIC TRAINING IN ENGLISH BECOME MORE EVIDENT. ENGLISH MUST BE TAUGHT, AS IT WERE, FROM GROUND UP, AND THERE IS NEED FOR STILL MORE PRACTICAL WORK. THE UNITED STATES HAS PROVIDED A FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, AND ALSO SUPPLIES SUPPORT MATERIALS IN THE FORM OF TEXTS, FILMS, TAPES, ETC. THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY EQUIPMENT WHICH WAS OFFERED BY THE US SEVERAL YEARS AGO HAS NOT FUNCTIONED FOR OVER A YEAR. WITHOUT PROPERLY TRAINED TECHNICIAN TO KEEP IT IN WORKING ORDER, IT DOUBTFUL THAT IT WILL EVER BE COMPLETELY USEFUL.

THE UNIVERSITY PROGRAM IS A TWO YEAR ONE, AND LEADS TO

THE D.U.E.L. (DIPLOME UNIVERSITAIRE D'ETUDES LITERAIRES).
SINCE EQUIVALENCY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH UNIVERSITIES IN
FRANCE, THE PROGRAM MUST CONFORM TO FRENCH STANDARDS AND
METHODS OF APPLICATION. GRADUATES USUALLY CONTINUE THEIR
STUDIES IN FRANCE. THIS YEAR, SIX STUDENTS ARE SCHEDULED
TO RECEIVE THEIR UNIVERSITY DIPLOMAS IN ENGLISH. AMONG THE
HUNDRED OR SO STUDENTS STUDYING ENGLISH, CAREER ORIENTATIONS
OF TEACHING, COMMERCIAL/BUSINESS, INTERPRETATION/TRANSLATION
AND DIPLOMACY ARE THE MOST COMMON.

3. ENGLISH IN TEACHER TRAINING. STUDENTS OF THE ECOLE
NORMALE SUPERIEURE ARE PUT INTO THE SAME COURSES AS THE
ENGLISH MAJORS AT THE UNIVERSITY. THEY THUS RECEIVE NO
SEPARATE PROGRAM DESIGNED TO PREPARE THEM AS TEACHERS OF
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

THE ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE IS UNDERGOING RESTRUCTURING
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 LIBREV 00438 01 OF 02 181058Z

THIS YEAR, WITH THE RESULT THAT IT WILL BE TWO OR THREE YEARS
BEFORE THE FIRST TEACHERS ARE PRODUCED UNDER THE NEXT SYSTEM.
AND THEN IT IS PREDICTED THAT ONLY THREE OR FOUR TEACHERS A
YEAR WILL BE PRODUCED IN ALL SUBJECTS.

BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL IN HIGHER AND
MORE REMUNERATIVE POSITIONS THAN TEACHING, THERE IS A BRAIN
DRAIN IN THE TEACHING CORPS. ALL OF THE BEST GABONESE TRAINED
AS TEACHERS IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS LEAVE TEACHING TO JOIN
GOVERNMENT SERVICE, LEAVING THOSE WHO ARE REALLY LEAST
QUALIFIED TO MAN THE SCHOOLS.

INSERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IS
NON EXISTENT.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LIBREV 00438 02 OF 02 181107Z
ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 /024 W
-----181121 092836 /21
R 180940Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8933

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 LIBREVILLE 0438

PASS USIS WASHDC

USIA FOR IAA

4. ENGLISH IN THE USIS PROGRAM.

(A) USIS OFFERS ENGLISH LESSONS TO SLEECTED GROUPS OF GABONESE TARGET AUDIENCE INDIVIDUALS THREE EVENINGS A WEEK AT THE CULTURAL CENTER (CLASSES ARE TAUGHT BY THE FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR AND WIFE OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS OFFICER), AND DISTRUBUTES AN INCREASING NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKS TO LOCAL LIBRARIES.

(B) AT THE REQUEST OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF MINES AND ENERGY USIS ORGANIZED AN ENGLISH CLASS FOR 14 GABONESE CIVIL SERVANTS WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN AN ERTS PHOTO INTERPRETATION COURSE. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPONENT WAS HANDLED BY THE FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR AND THE COMPONENT ON SPACE TECHNOLOGY TERMINOLOGY WAS COVERED BY THE PAO WHO HAS CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD.

(C) THE PAO GIVES PRIVATE LESSONS DAILY TO THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF MINES AND ENERGY(WHO REPRESENTS GABON AT ALLOPEC MEETINGS).

(D) THE MINSTER OF POST AND TELECOMMUNICATION S REQUESTED USIS ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING AND ENGLISH CLASS FOR 20 KEY MEMBERS OF HIS MINSTRY IN PREPARATION FOR THE OAU CONFERENCE IN LIBREVILLE SCHEDULED FOR THE SUMMER OF 1977. THE CLASS MEETS SIX MONRINGS A WEEK AT THE CULTURAL
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LIBREV 00438 02 OF 02 181107Z

CENTER AND IS TAUGHT BY THE WIFE OF THE PAO.

(E) AT THE REQUEST OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF GABONESE RAO AND TELEVISION, THE PAO HAS ALSO ORGANIZED AND TEACHES AN ENGLISH CLASS FOR FIVE MEMBERS OF THE DIRECTORS STAFF, WHICH MEETS TWICE WEEKLY AT USIS.

(F) USIS PLANS FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR IN SEPTEMBER 1977 AN ADVANCED PROGRAM OF ENGLISH TEACHING CONSISTING OF A FILM AND DISCUSSION GROUP TO MEET ONCE A WEEK.

(G) THE PERSONAL ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT BONGO ON INFORMATION HAS REQUESTED USIS ORGANIZE AN ENGLISH TEACHING TELEVISION PROGRAM USING THE 'LETS LEARN ENGLISH SERIES'. PROGRAM WOULD CONSIST OF TWO THRITY MINUTE SEQUENCES A WEEK WITH PAO EXPLAINING VOCABULARY AND EXPRESSIONS IN FRENCH.

5. ENGLISH AND THE PEACE CORPS.

(A) THERE ARE 18 PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ALL NINE PROVINCES TEACHING BETWEEN 15 AND 25 HOURS PER

WEEK. EACH PCV REACHES APPROXIMATELY 200 STUDENTS. ONE PCV MAINTAINS AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLUB WHICH PRODUCES A MONTHLY NEWSPAPER IN THE INTERIOR.

(B) USIS HAS REQUESTED ONE PCV TO ASSIST IN ITS ENGLISH TEACHING PROGRAMS NEXT YEAR.

(C) ONE PCV CURRENTLY GIVES PRIVATE LESSONS TO A MINISTER, AND WILL SOON BEGIN GIVING LESSONS TO WIFE OF PRESIDENT BONGO.

IN SPITE OF THE RATHER UNUSUAL CONDITIONS WHICH PREVAIL IN GABON COMPARED TO TOTHER COUNTRIES IN AFRICA, SOME TYPES OF ENGLISH TEACHING PROGRAMMING ARE EFEECTIVE. DEJARNETTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING, PROGRESS REPORTS, CULTURAL EXCHANGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LIBREV00438
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770058-0658
Format: TEL
From: LIBREVILLE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770228/aaaaayjy.tel
Line Count: 235
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 75a17cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3283337
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REVIEW OF USG ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM
TAGS: SCUL, GB, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/75a17cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009